

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding final Office Action mailed February 18, 2005. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and pending claims are respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claim 25 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In that it is believed that every rejection has been overcome, it is respectfully submitted that each of the claims that remains in the case is presently in condition for allowance.

II. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

A. Rejection of Claims 22-24, 26 and 27

Claims 22-24 and 26-27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hess, et al. ("Hess," U.S. Pat. No. 5,681,764) in view of Smith, et al. ("Smith," U.S. Pat. No. 6,302,523) and Mrvos, et al. ("Mrvos," U.S. Pat. No. 6,409,312). Through this Response, the allowable subject matter of claim 25 (now canceled) has been added to independent claim 22. In view of that amendment, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 22-24 and 26-27, as well as claim 43, are presently allowable.

B. Rejection of Claims 22-24, 26-29, 34-37, 39, and 43-46

Claims 22-24, 26-29, 34-37, 39, and 43-46 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Radke et al. (“Radke,” U.S. 5,859,654) in view of Mrvos. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

As is noted above, the allowable subject matter of claim 25 (now canceled) has been added to independent claim 22. In view of that amendment, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 22-24, 26-27, and 43 are allowable.

Regarding claims 28-29, 34-37, and 44-45, Applicant submits that neither Radke nor Mrvos teach or suggest a “top coat layer defining a countersunk bore corresponding to the nozzle”, as are recited in independent claims 28 and 34. Specifically, Radke’s “top coat layer” 16 defines no “countersunk bore” (see Fig. 1). Notably, Mrvos similarly fails to teach such a feature. Accordingly, claims 28-29, 34-37, and 44-45 are allowable over Radke/Mrvos for at least that reason.

Regarding claims 39 and 46, the rejection is now moot due to the cancellation of those claims.

C. Rejection of Claims 28-34

Claims 28-34 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mrvos in view of Smith. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant submits that neither Mrvos nor Smith teaches or suggests a “top coat layer defining a countersunk bore corresponding to the nozzle”, as are recited in independent claims 28 and 34. Specifically, Smith’s “top coat layer” 158 defines no “countersunk bore” (see Fig. 4). Notably, Mrvos similarly teaches no such feature. Accordingly, claims 28-30 and 34, as well as claims 44-45, are allowable over Mrvos/Smith for at least that reason.

Claims 31-33 have been canceled through this Response. Therefore, the rejection is moot as to those claims.

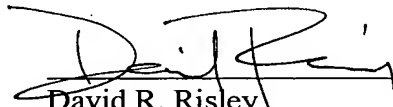
III. Canceled Claims

As identified above, claims 25, 31-33, 38-42, and 46 have been canceled from the application through this Response without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer. Applicant reserves the right to present these canceled claims, or variants thereof, in continuing applications to be filed subsequently.

CONCLUSION

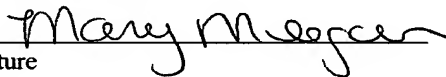
Applicant respectfully submits that Applicant's pending claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, postage prepaid, in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450, on

4-15-05


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